

Ed. Murray

THE
SIEGE of CALAIS.
A
TRAGEDY.

SIEGE OF CALAIS.



T. R. A. C. E. D. Y.

K Burette de Bellay
THE
SIEGE of CALAIS.

A
TRAGEDY.

From the FRENCH of
MR. DE BELLOY.

WITH
HISTORICAL NOTES.

By Charles Denis



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THE
SIEGE OF CALAIS.

T R A C E D

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T R A N S L A T O R

PREFATORY ADVERTISEMENT.

TH E Translator, in justice to Mr. de Belloy, thinks he ought to inform those who do not understand French, that in the following translation he has not added a single sentiment, nor a thought of his own; so that whatever beauties or defects may be found in the Play, they belong to the Author alone.

Mr. de Belloy speaks in his Preface much to the same purpose, in regard to the historical facts on which his Tragedy is founded. I debarred, says he, my imagination from having any share in the plan of this Play; it would have been very injudicious, in a work undertaken for the honour of the nation, to have given the French imaginary virtues and pretended exploits. I resolved that even the episodical events should be drawn from history; happily, I found, within a small space of time from this famous Siege, some facts that might be wove with the principal action.

Such is the episode of Count Harcourt: that nobleman, who commanded the first line of the English army at the battle of Cressy, found amongst the slain his brother Lewis, or John of Harcourt, who fought against him on the side of France. He was so shocked at this terrible misfortune that he quitted Edward's camp, and threw himself at Philip de Valois's feet, who granted him his pardon. I have postponed for some months this interesting fact to join it to my subject: I thought that the violent agitations of this noble Rebel would make a fine contrast with the calm virtues of the faithful Burgbers of Calais.

The

The proposals that Edward makes to the daughter of the Count de Vienne to draw her and her father into his party never were made, since Alienora is the only feigned character in the Play; but it is certain, that Edward had made the like treaties with several of the nobility, and particularly with Godfrey of Harcourt. He had gained over the Count d'Eu, Constable of France, and what could he promise less to one that possessed the highest post in the state, than to make him Vice-Roy or Lieutenant-General of the kingdom; which he had already offered to the Duke of Brabant?

I may then say of this Tragedy what Corneille said of his Death of Pompey, that there were very few dramatic pieces where history was more preserved and at the same time more falsified. The events of my Play, in general, are true; but they are sometimes accompanied with circumstances that are different from what they were in reality, it is a right that dramatic poetry assumes, a Tragedy is not a History.

Some have thought it extraordinary that I have not made the Governor of Calais appear. John de Vienne was certainly one of the bravest officers of his time; but I could not introduce him on the scene, without taking away the merit of the heroic action of Eustache de St. Pierre, which would have been most unjust; and Vienne devoting himself as second would have degraded his character. I have given him then a daughter to replace him in some measure, who not being bound by the same duties, may appear greater than him in doing less, perhaps, than what he would have done.

I have likewise been found fault with for having employed another means to disarm Edward's wrath than that which history attests. I have given the Queen of England the honour of having implored the pardon of the six Citizens, but I could not put it in action, nor make it the catastrophe of the Play; because the Queen could not possibly have any connection with the plot, and

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to have introduced her in the last scene, merely to fall upon her knees, would not have been to the taste of these times. I have therefore made use of that pathetic resource that Priam employs (in Homer) to soften the wrath of the implacable Achilles.

So far the Translator thought necessary to quote from Mr. de Bolloy's Preface. All that he has to add is, that in regard to his Tragedy he has endeavoured to keep up to the spirit and enthusiasm of the Author: if he has done that, 'tis all the merit he claims.

DRAMATIS

ADVERTISING
DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

EDWARD III. *King of England.*

GODFREY of HARCOURT, *one of his Generals.*

ALIENORA, *Daughter of Count Vienne Governor
of Calais.*

Sir WALTER MANNY, *an English Knight.*

The Count DE MELUN, *a Knight of France.*

EUSTACHE ST. PIERRE, *Mayor of Calais,*

AURELIUS *his Son.*

AMBLETUSE, *Citizen of Calais,*

An English Officer.

Troop of English Knights.

Troop of Citizens of Calais,

A Herald at Arms.

King Edward's Guards,

The Scene is in Calais,

SIEGE of CALAIS.

TRAGEDY.

ACT I.

SCENE I.

**EUSTACHE de St. PIERRE and
AMBLETUSE.**

St. PIERRE.

HAT! does Count Vienne abandon
Calais now,
And leave his government in charge
to us?
Confine us here, whilst he with
generous zeal

Fights for our lives at hazard of his own,
And limits us to cares inactive and
Unknown? His orders are that in the square
We take our post, alert to fly where'er

B

The

2 The SIEGE of CALAIS.

The foe makes an assault. But 'tis in vain;
For Edward by his feints and false attacks
Divides our strength, and weakens our defence.
O my dear country!—O tormenting thought!
My fellow citizens devote their blood,
And I'm debarr'd to let mine stream with theirs.
O jealous governor! thy val'rous pride
Reserves the dang'rous station for thyself.

A M B L E T U S E.

Chief magistrate of Calais, thou virtuous man,
Assuage thy grief; our hearts alike repine
To be from danger safe; but you can boast
A valiant son, who in his country's cause
Perhaps may fall. Harecourt and noble Vienne
Admire his worth; so young and yet so brave,
He adds new honours to your reverend age.
During this horrid siege, his warlike deeds
Have rais'd in our dejected hearts a dawn
Of hope: and O! if to compleat our labours
This day should rank him midst th' illustrious French,
And he obtain the prize, the glorious prize!
Most dear to Gallia's sons—their king's esteem!

St. P I E R R E.

My gen'rous friend, in vain with pleasing views
You strive to soothe my anxious breast; I feel
An unknown heaviness that sinks me down
And checks the thought of future happiness.

A M B L E T U S E.

What! do you then despair of our success?

St. P I E R R E.

I don't despair; my hopes are grounded on
The destiny of France. Woe to those states,
Those coward states, who yielding to the storm
Forsake the helm, and give up all for lost;
And what is wort of all cease to esteem
Themselves!—No, kind heav'n be prais'd, we are
Nor

THE SIEGE of CALAIS.

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Not yet reduc'd to that desponding state,
'Tis from th' abyss of woe resources spring.
Who knows? perhaps this very day my son
And I may perish for the state? should all
Our citizens have thoughts like these, 'twoud be
An omen of our country's preservation.

AMBLETUSE.

You've taught them how to triumph over fate.
With transport they would all lay down their lives
If thro' their glorious deaths France might be sav'd.

St. PIERRE.

I own on that foundation 'tis I build
My firmest hopes; for much I apprehend
We ever shall find means to introduce
The succours which the king himself has brought
To our relief; for Oh! how vain th' attempt
To force this wond'rous camp the foe has rais'd,
This master piece of art to nature join'd;
For with such works immense we're circumscrib'd
As if around our walls another Calais rose.
How can the king and Vienne, divided thus,
Concert on measures to prevent th' assault
Which now the foe prepares? besides the stars
Propitious that preside o'er Edward's fate,
Still seem to bode sure victory to him
Who won the day on Cressy's fatal plains.
Tho' John of Harcourt, faithful to his prince,
Against his brother Godfrey draws his sword;
What avails it? that rebel brother fights
For England's cause; Harcourt, the glory once
Of France, its terror now, with guilty zeal
Baffles the efforts of unskillful troops,
And crushes valour by superior talents.
The art of war has nothing hid from him;
And to a Frenchman France now owes its ruin.

THE SIEGE of CALAIS.

AMBLETUSE.

Such were the sad effects of court intrigues;
'Twas from ill usage he a traitor turn'd;
Tho' innocent, yet thrown into a dungeon;
The only reason to excuse his crime.
'Twas vengeance led his fiery youth astray;
A minister's resentment caus'd his rage,
Which banishment encreas'd the more. Alas!
One man's oppression brought on all our woes.

ST. PIERRE.

As yet I hear the furious cannon's roar,

AMBLETUSE.

Which from the sea re-echoes to our roofs.

ST. PIERRE.

Ah! what avails henceforth the hero's courage?
Can he resist the dire Volcano's rage
That seems to hoard within its brazen bore
The thunderbolts of heaven? which now on earth
Are thrown by England's sons: with them, as yet,
The baneful secret rests. The time will come
When all the nations of the world shall feel
The force destructive of this fatal engine;
Infernal monument of a dark age
Of ignorance, when all their science was
The horrid art each other to destroy.

O power supreme! 'twas surely for our crimes
You suffer in our hands the fire of hell
And Oh! too true! that man—bloody-thirsty man,
Will make it answer to his cruel purpose.—

Methinks I hear no more the cannon's noise

AMBLETUSE.

[after listening.]

O sad fore-boding silence!

ST. PIERRE.

—All is lost;

For I no longer see our standard wave
Which on yon citadel ought to proclaim
Our victory.

AMBLETUSE

The SIEGE of CALAIS.

AMBLETUSE.

—Then we are lost indeed;

ST. PIERRE.

If so—but Oh! I shudder at the thought!
My son is dead! he never could retreat.
O my poor boy!—lye still my heart; first let me
Save my country, and then I'll weep for him.
O patriot love! thou pure celestial flame!
Soul of my soul! and source of every virtue!
O in my bosom fan the generous fire,
And dry the tears paternal grief would shed.
It is my country, 'tis my king, 'tis France,
That calls and not my son, who ought to die
In their defence. Haste to the walls, my friend,
Of this disastrous crisis learn th' event.

SCENE II.

ST. PIERRE.

[Alone.]

This is the fatal moment I foresaw,
Of all my days of woe it is the last.
It is the Hero's hour. — no one returns.
O virtuous daughter of intrepid Vienne,
Fair Alienora, what will be thy fate?
She from our battlements high walls must needs
Have seen our overthrow; and valiant Vienne
Who never yet re-enter'd Calais gates
Without the victor's palm, he must have fall'n,
His gen'rous soul could not survive our fate.
But Alienora comes.

SCENE

S C E N E III.

ALIENORA. ST. PIERRE.

ALIENORA *[Supported by her women.]*

O my dear father!

ST. PIERRE.

Alas! she scarcely breathes.—Ah! why these tears?

ALIENORA.

Do they not plainly speak our common woes?
 If greater ills could fall upon our heads
 Our cruel fate would shower them down upon us,
 The king, Harcourt, my father, all the troops
 With furious onset rush'd upon the foe,
 In hopes to force their formidable camp.
 The king is wounded, and my father is
 In chains, so says report; Harcourt is dead;
 I saw him drop. Our soldiers march'd along
 In dread array; when on a sudden roar
 Th' unseen but fatal instruments of death,
 Which ply'd with art against our hardy troops
 O'erwhelm'd whole ranks with one impetuous burst;
 Yet still our noble knights, my father at
 Their head, maintain the fight amidst the storm
 Of iron balls that fly promiscuous round.
 Alas! one fatal shot his courser struck
 Who in his anguish dragg'd his rider on
 And threw him midst his foes, besmear'd in blood,
 Swifter than my loud shrieks, that were unheard,
 Our broken troops flew quick to his relief;
 Rallied by zeal, to my fond wishes true,
 They look'd upon my father as their own.
 But yet the never-ceasing spring of death
 Flows fiercely on with sure destruction fraught,
 And strews the bloody field with heaps of slain.

Thus

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Thus far the cannon play'd its fiery part,
The rest was finish'd by the slaught'ring sword.—
My father midst this general rout, receives
With great regret, his succour and his chain.
To Edward's son the prince his jealous rival,
He yielded, as 'tis said, his broken lance.

St. PIERRE.

Madam, in your just grief I sympathize.
I fain would ask,—but oh! my fault'ring lips
Refuse their office—once I had a son—
Am I a father still?

ALIENORA.

—You are! he's safe
But wounded; carried off in his despite.
By our own troops, all cover'd with his blood.
So long as he could wield his sword, he was
The soldier's great example and support.

St. PIERRE.

Enough; he lives. His blood streams for his country!
A double blessing heaven bestows on me;
I've still a son to offer to my king.

ALIENORA.

My admiration for a while suspends
My grief! O truly loyal son of France,
Happy for me, that in my father's absence
You fondly look upon me as your daughter;
You are my father, yes, in you I see
His brave undaunted soul. What dastard heart
Can tremble near St. Pierre?

St. PIERRE.

—I haste away
To rally on our walls, what yet remains
Of our defeated troops.

ALIENORA

The SIEGE of CALAIS.

ALIENORA.

—That prudent task
 Your son, the brave Aurelius, has perform'd.
 The English are retir'd within their camp.
 All is secure upon our ramparts. But
 Who will inform me of my father's fate?
 Can he escape vindictive Edward's rage?
 To learn his destiny, my anxious fears
 Have ventur'd to depute a trusty spy
 Into the English camp; excuse my zeal,
 My father's peril terrifies my soul,
 Shakes my firm heart, and draws these gushing tears.
 O gen'rous St. Pierre, now you see it plain,
 Edward, not satisfied with England's throne,
 Pretends to France a right hereditary
 By virtue of a claim his mother gives,
 And looks upon our lawful king, as a
 Rebellious prince.—Alas! what if he should
 With that same plea,—punish my father as
 A traitor?

ST. PIERRE.

—No, Edward has other views;
 He wants to captivate the hearts of France,
 And not t'exasperate them with ill-tim'd rigour:
 But should his hasty violence o'ercome
 His policy, does not young Harcourt stand
 The greatest fav'rite of the British king?
 Godfrey of Harcourt, whom your father train'd
 And treated as his son; and would have been
 Indeed, had he been just to you. Harcourt,
 The cause of our misfortunes, knows full well
 Your deep distress. He'll intercede for Vienne;
 Can Edward ought refuse the man by whom
 Alone he conquers?

ALIENORA.

Ah! the only man
 In France, false to his country and his king!

ALONSO.

O name

The SIEGE of CALAIS.

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O name him not; for I should blush to owe
 An obligation to a traitor. Yes,
 His name is my dishonour; he has dar'd
 To break the sacred bonds of love; that love
 Which pleads still in my breast for an ingrate.
 When I consented to receive his heart,
 Mine he deserv'd; his virtues were the tie
 That bound them both together. I am not
 Asham'd to own a passion so sincere.
 Let guilty love mysteriously be hush'd;
 Mine was as innocent and pure as light.
 I gloried in my conqueror. When in
 The tournaments, that glorious school of fame
 He made his first essays in valiant games,
 Or when his sword was in the Christian cause
 Unsheath'd in holy wars, still on his arms
 My cyphers and my colours were display'd;
 My tears were the reward for all the blood
 He lost. Ah! then that blood was pure, and love
 Was comforted by honour. ~~B~~ Alas!
 I now must weep at his disloyal deeds,
 For victories that cover him with shame.

S C E N E IV.

ALIENORA. ST. PIERRE. AMBLETUSE.

A M B L E T U S E.

All hope is fled. I saw your valiant son,
 Tho' wounded, rally our remaining troops;
 When thro' his countenance, all pale and wan,
 His eyes still sparkled with courageous fire,
 No sooner was his streaming wound bound up
 But quick he flies, and faces death again,
 Repulses noble Manny's waving banners,
 And for our troops secures a safe retreat.

C

More

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More still he would have done, had we not stoppt
His daring bold career. In one so young
Imprudence is o'erlook'd when urg'd by valour.
But here he comes.

S C E N E V.

ALIENORA, ST. PIERRE, AMBLETUSE,
AURELIUS, [*with his arm in a scarf, leaning
on a citizen.*]

ST. PIERRE, [*embracing his son.*]

My dearest son! let me
Infold thee in my arms! true to my blood,
Which thou with honour has so nobly spilt.
Feel how this heart, from which thou didst receive it,
Beats with uncommon joy.

AURELIUS.

I still have blood
Enough to make our enemies pay dear,
For what remains—but I exert too soon
My zeal—permit me to recall my spirits.

[*He sits down, and his father bends over him.*]

Your eyes bedew my face with tears of joy.
O might I die victorious in your arms,
If by my death these ramparts could be saved;
Then in my last expiring moments give
My king my blood, my tears unto my father!
Ah Alienora! know'st thou by whom I bleed?
I fell with honour in defence of Harcourt,
Then wett'ring in the dust—'twas Harcourt's brother
That overcame me. O sad interview!
Ah! was the dying brother the most wretched?

ALIENORA.

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ALIENORA.

O heavens! is't your decree that all he holds,
Perhaps most dear, his victims fall? must he
Not shudder then to see such crimes succeed?

AMBLETUSE.

The leaders of our citizens are come
In this distress to take your final orders,

ST. PIERRE,

Let them approach—now Alienora is
The time to shew from whom you sprung. Assume
Your father's place, and reign in every heart,
A glorious pattern to your sex. Excite
The zeal of our desponding troops; you are
Their oracle—'tis honour they consult.

SCENE VI.

ALIENORA, ST. PIERRE, AURELIUS,
AMBLETUSE, *Chiefs of the Citizens.*

ST. PIERRE.

Defenders of these walls, and leaders of
Our brother citizens, whose brave exploits
Raise emulation even in our heroes;
Must we then see our usurp'd lillies join'd
With Albion's leopards, on our ramparts fixt?

A second harvest has enrich'd our plains,
And falls again beneath the victor's scyth,
Since England's monarch first attack'd these walls;
Which still, tho' tott'ring, baffle his attempts.
Still do the valiant sons of France dispute
The prize of fame with England's warlike troops:
How many times the foe has thought to see

An end of their assaults ; in hopes next morn
 To mount the widen'd breach, and storm the town.
 Day light appears ; with wonder they behold
 Another bulwark rais'd, form'd of the rubbish
 Of our demolish'd walls, then driven back
 Over the ruins which themselves had made.
 Such courage, and such zeal, as great, if not
 Still greater than their own, at last oblige
 Them to desist from perils and attacks,
 Which have in vain been try'd to tire us out.
 Alas ! they take a surer way to vict'ry,
 Resolv'd to furnish what they can't o'ercome.
 Already we have felt the worst of woes,
 Which spring from one another ; pestilence
 And famine we have seen amongst us spread
 Their dire effects : death, desolation, horror !
 When heav'n's will, and rig'rous seasons, brought
 On want, and hunger swept away our brethren,
 Then dire contagion rose from forth their graves,
 And what was once most dear becomes our bane,
 The vilest food, what misery would spurn,
 In this calamity is sought in vain,
 Nor can gold purchase now the wish'd for offals,
 Then this disastrous fight, our last resource,
 Has cut us off from every hope of succour ;
 Whilst round our port a hundred ships of war
 Confine us here with famine and with death,
 If we were but, as in the common case
 Of those besieged, after a brave defence
 Oblig'd to yield, with you I would surrender ;
 But cruel Edward dares to t'injoin a crime ;
 Commands us to dissolve th' allegiance which
 We owe our lawful monarch, and abjure
 His power ; then by a sacrilegious oath
 Confirm his right—pretended to the throne
 Of France, and bids us look upon him as
 A prince that pardons his rebellious subjects.

You

You ne'er will give our most unhappy states
So shameful an example—they would not
Take it; no, never will you blot your fame,
The price of so much blood, rather than that
O let us die for him for whom alone
We liv'd: be yours the honour of the choice,
All I desire is to lead the way.

A L I E N O R A.

Brave citizens, I see what effort 'tis
Our virtuous mayor does now expect from you.
A noble sacrifice my father once
Projected—and happy is his daughter that
She can accomplish it without his aid.
Here I was born, and here shall be my grave.
Since Calais can no longer be preserv'd,
O let it be in flames our funeral pile:
Perhaps this very night the hardy foe
May storm our walls, unable to resist,
Where scarce a feeble rank of men remains
For their defence. Remember, O my friends,
The ransack of Beauvais; reflect on that
And tremble at its fate. Can you behold
Your bleeding sons, your violated daughters,
Drag'd o'er the bodies of their dying mothers!
O sooner let's submit to our hard fate,
Honour will find in death a kind asylum:
Then will you see with me your faithful wives,
Embracing parents, husbands, children, friends,
With you together spring into the flames.
And then may Edward, after a whole year's
Blocade, gain nothing but a heap of ashes.
May Harcourt see, stung with the pangs of guilt,
What noble souls were sacrificed by him.
And die for shame. And to compleat my wish,
O may my father weep for me as once
He wept his son—with tears of admiration!

Then

Then midst consuming flames we may at least
Have this to boast; that ceasing to be French
We ceas'd to be, and Calais was no more.

AURELIUS.

O noble transport! honour's last resource
That fires my soul, and animates my heart,
Our country's anxious eyes are fixt on us,
Their destiny depends on our example.
Let us revive their drooping hopes; let's
Shew such virtues as were never known before,
To drive this valiant Islander away,
To snatch our scepter from a foreign race,
And to convince him, tho' he may destroy,
Reduce us to the dust, he can't enslave us.
By the brave English we shall be admir'd,
They'll envy us our burning sepulchres.
If from its feeble clay he frees his soul,
If he surmounts and stifles nature's voice,
We for our king can overcome it too,
Let us away. But can I see amidst
Devouring flames that venerable head,
And these paternal hands?—I cannot do't;
Like me, aghast! you shudder at the thought.
I'm youngest, and 'tis fit that I should be
The foremost in the sacrifice.

St. PIERRE. [*Stopping him.*]

Hold. Stay

My son—my friends, 'tis heaven inspires me; yes,
You all shall live. Reserve your courage for
Our king. Let us declare to England's monarch

[*To Alienora.*]

Your project, and our fixt determination;
We'll offer to renounce the desperate deed,
Give up the town, with all its stores and riches,
Provided he permits us to depart,
Our soldiers, wives, and children. Well I know
Edward

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Edward will storm with rage, but he'll consent,
Rather than be deprived of such a conquest.
What signifies to Philip's great designs
To lose these walls, so he but save his people?
For him we will forego our wealth, our city:
A greater sacrifice than that of life,
His situation calls us to his aid,
Let us forget past perils in new dangers,
Long we have been inur'd to war and death,
Let him intrust to our experienced arms
His weakest ramparts, and his threatn'd towns,
Then may the English find us every where,
And in each city meet another Calais.
Companions, in your countenance I read
Your approbation: haste, dear Ambletuse,
And to the victor king propose the treaty:
And we, let us inform our citizens
Of their deliverance. Ah! what a gift
For the beloved monarch we adore!

The END of the FIRST ACT.

ACT



A C T. II.

S C E N E I.

HARCOURT, [*Alone.*]

WHAT conflict labours in my troubled breast?
Confusion all!—I'm of myself asham'd!

City that owes to me thy woes and fame!

Calais behold thy victor!—He bewails

His victory! O Harcourt! O my brother!

Wounded before my face, I saw thee fall.

O virtuous man!—whom once I did resemble!

Thy shade still hovers round my bed, and haunts
my mind; I see thee now gasping in death!

I hear thy dying groans—what have I done?

What sacred duties, long by me neglected,

Have thy last words recall'd? they strike my ear,

As does thy flowing blood my eyes.

Remorse, shame, rage, and grief, a thousand stings

Together torture my distracted soul;

And love, more terrible in this extrem,

Increases by the pangs itself inflicts.

O Alienora! you whose worthy love

I did betray, whose life I have imbitter'd,

O! if you are susceptible of vengeance,

Come and enjoy my woes—you are reveng'd.

T O A

S C E N E

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SCENE II.

HARCOURT, an OFFICER.

HARCOURT.

What does she say?

OFFICER.

My Lord she comes, I gave
Your message without mentioning your name.

HARCOURT.

I long to see her, and yet dread her presence.
The sight of those we have offended is
A reprimand. [*makes sign to the officer to retire.*]

SCENE III.

ALIENORA, [*without knowing Harcourt.*]

My Lord, 'tis more than I
Presum'd to hope from a victorious king;
What to dispel my fears for my dear father
He deigns so far to honour—Harcourt, ah!

[*Harcourt kneels.*]

Who has expos'd me to a fight so shocking?

HARCOURT.

Repentance, weeping, and despairing love;
O! for a while restrain your just resentment.

ALIENORA.

Obey thy king—tell me what of my father?

D

HARCOURT.

HARCOURT.

Edward assures you, that he will protect him.

ALIENORA.

I have no farther parley then with thee. *[going.]*

HARCOURT.

[following.]

You must, or hear me speak or see me die;
My furious love shall satisfy your hate.
Remain, or else behold my streaming blood.

[drawing his sword.]

ALIENORA.

This still was wanting to compleat thy crimes :
Persist in guilt, without attonement die.

HARCOURT.

To make attonement 'tis you see me here :
O! be the guide of my bewilder'd soul,
Distracted even in repentance; save,
O save me from myself; deign to support
Returning virtue, least I plunge again
Into th' abyss. Dishonour to my love,
The scourge and shame of all our noble house,
Disgrace to Harcourt's name, which I have stain'd—

ALIENORA.

The name of Harcourt stain'd!—dar'st thou believe it?
The hero's name, tho' by a traytor borne,
Will not less pure arrive to immortality,
On thee their glory makes thy shame recoil,
Which serves t'enlighten what it can't obscure,
Thy infamy's thy own. Thy generous sons
Shall in oblivion leave thy nothingness,
And turn their eyes up to their ancestors;
Cut off from thy illustrious race, which had
Receiv'd new honour by thy great exploits,
And hop'd to be surpass'd by thee in fame,

Thou

Thou has destroy'd their glorious expectation,
Thy virtues are the instruments of crime.
Thy brother, with less talents, more humane,
Now fall'n in death—perhaps by thy own hand,
To our fond wishes true, in him were join'd
Philosopher, friend, warrior, citizen,
Still faithful to his country and his king.
E'en his defeats cast shame on thy exploits,
'Gainst him, 'gainst Vienne, drawing thy faithless
sword,

Thy ev'ry victory was a parricide:
Proceed, and dare in these unhappy walls
To see me plunge alive into the flames.
Go, gather thy ignoble laurels stain'd
With brother's blood, and cover'd with my ashes.

HARCOURT.

You harrow up my soul, and tear my heart:
O horror! what! kill my brother! no; no:
But by his death I live again to honour.
O where was you when Harcourt was oppress'd?
Had you been present I had never fall'n;
Your beauty, and my love, had stop'd me short
Upon the brink of guilt; the loss of you
Induced me to rebel. Banish'd from France,
Which still was dear to me, I took up arms
To punish an imperious minister.
The more I saw of foreign land, the more
I lov'd my own. 'Twas for my country, 'twas
For you, to save you both that I embark'd.
Edward, who sooth'd my hopes of love and vengeance,
Appear'd to me the lawful king of France:
My brother's death awakens me to virtue,
Opens my eyes, and points out all my errors.
When over heaps of dead I forc'd my way
Along the bloody field, in fell pursuit,
I heard a voice that call'd me by my name.

I stop'd—alas! it was my dying brother's hand
 Who to me feebly stretch'd his shiv'ring hand,
 His blood still gushing from his mangl'd head,
 His hair all clotted, and his face disfigur'd!
 I scarce his features could recall.—O come,
 Said he, and let me in my brother's arms
 Breathe out my parting soul—Oh may my death
 Obtain one boon—the king in me has lost
 A soldier; O return, and let him find
 In thee a useful hero. Take my place,
 Repair thy fame, and die for him like me.
 I press'd him to my heart, and with his blood
 Mingled my tears. He died, I on his corpse
 Was found, and both were carried off together.
 Soon as I was recover'd from my swoon,
 Recall'd to grief, I heard your name pronounc'd,
 Your dreadful project, and your pressing danger,
 Join'd to your father's stern disdain, all, all
 Concurr'd to make me fly to you for succour,
 I feel that love, when purified by honour,
 Still adds more vigour to the cries of nature.

A L I E N O R A.

Go then, redress our woes, and thy own crimes,
 I may forget them all—haste and deliver
 Calais, restore a father to his child,
 And give new life to our expiring country.
 Oh! with what zeal I'd wreath thy glorious laurels
 And crown the brow of a victorious hero.
 But Oh what error! dream of flatt'ring hope,
 Our city cannot be reliev'd by thee.
 Already famine has unnerv'd our strength;
 Besides, our chiefs have given to Britain's king
 Their plighted faith to open him our gates.

H A R C O U R T.

THE SIEGE of CALAIS.

21

HARCOURT.

I see the precipice to which I'm drove,
And virtue comes too late for my relief,
A thousand obstacles arise between us;
Ah! to one crime how many more are link'd!
I may at least rejoin your faithful troops;
But what! will Philip e'er confide again
In one who did so basely break his faith?
Besides, the king of England has a right
To claim my most unbounded gratitude.
His friendship, unsuspecting mine, repos'd
Within my breast his most important measures:
Can I make use of them against himself!
I that entic'd him to this war, spite of
The voice of his august and prudent senate.
Did not Count D'Artois drag e'en to his grave
The stings of conscience, and a vain remorse?
His dread example shews what fate attends
On such as dare betray their lawful king.

ALIENORA.

Who is't I see advancing midst our chiefs?

HARCOURT.

It is Sir Walter Manny, Edward's fav'rite,
Who brings an answer to their proffer'd terms.

SCENE IV.

ALIENORA, HARCOURT, MANNY, St.
PIERRE, AURELIUS, AMBLETUSE,
Chiefs of the Burghers, and Attendants.

MANNY.

Rebellious subjects! you who dare dispute
Brave Edward's double right by conquest and

By

THE SIEGE OF CALAIS.

By birth; had I not stopt the thunderbolt-
 Ready to hurt on your devoted heads,
 You all had perished in one common wreck.
 But he disdains a mad unthinking crowd
 That blindly hurries on to its own ruin,
 Having no notion of heroick clemency,
 It flies from good, and punishes itself.

Depart, and side again with the usurper;
 For know he will not long be stil'd your king.
 Go range yourselves beneath his tott'ring standard;
 Where'er you are your conquerors will find you.
 However Edward, stern in his commands,
 Exacts a sacrifice, which I with grief
 Pronounce. Pardon, says he, has no effect,
 And clemency invites them to new crimes.
 A just chastisement will be an example,
 And France, with terror, will behold their fate.

Six of your citizens he has condemn'd
 To death, which in my hands you most remit;
 On your compliance all the rest depends.

AMBLETUSE.

Shall we to such indignity submit?

ALIENORA [To Harcourt.

Behold the consequence of what thou'st done.

HARCOURT.

Just heaven!

ST. PIERRE.

O power supreme! support our virtue.

AURELIUS.

Was ever cruelty so much refin'd?
 Such calm ferocity, under the mask
 Of soft compassion! what not only lose
 Our lives but we must lose our honour too!

Then

Then would our enemies their fury fate
Both in our infamy and death.
'Tis not enough for Edward to destroy
Six virtuous men; we must ourselves devote
Them to his rage. Can we deliver up
All that is sacred, fathers, sons, and friends?
Unheard of insolence! how can they dare
Prescribe to Frenchmen such inhuman crimes!
Those who command them would no doubt com-
mit them.

But 'tis dishonour here, not death we dread.
A whole year's brave resistance ought to prove
Our people's virtue equal to their courage,
Which our fix'd resolution will confirm.
Come then, my friends, let's perish with the city.
[To Alienora.

Madam, this you fortold; 'tis th' only way
To save our glory at our lives expence.
By this heroic deed let us deprive
Our foe of all the fruit of his exploits,
Of which he now has made himself unworrrhy.
[To Manny.

And may the spot where Calais stood remain
A shining monument to consecrate
Our virtues, whilst it will attest your crimes,
And be perhaps the greatest mark of love
That Frenchmen naturally owe their king.

HARCOURT. [stopping the Citizens who are going of.
Calaisians stay; I cannot bear to see
The shocking glorious sacrifice to which
You run: for you I'll give up the reward
Due to my services. I know the love
That Edward has for me; I'll in return
Preserve his fame. 'Tis what I owe to him,
To you, and to myself; I'll draw the veil
Of prejudice that blinds him, and employ

My

14 The SIEGE of CALAIS.

My utmost power to gain my suit—e'en to
My tears; alas! thro' me no other arms
Remain t'oppose his will. Should he refuse
The favour I desire; should prosp'rous pride,
To all he owes me, shut his eyes and heart,
My blood shall flow with that of his six victims,
And by that glorious mixture wash away
Its stain. Yes, you shall see that he who caus'd
Your ruin merits still with you to die.

[To *Alienora*.]

My heart in losing you will life regret;
My chief and last concern is for my country.

SCENE V.

ALIENORA, MANNY, ST. PIERRE,
AURELIUS, and Citizens.

MANNY.

O may he soften Edward's heart, 'twould be
My greatest joy. It was my duty to
Declare my master's rigorous commands.
That done, I now may be myself, and shew
A modest victor, and a generous knight.
With grief, equal to yours, I oft have sigh'd
At Edward's rage; oft on my bended knee
For you have I implor'd his clemency;
His lords mov'd with that generous esteem
Which conquer'd merit forces from it's victors,
In vain have join'd my ineffectual prayers.
Nought can appease his fury and his hate.
He looks upon his vengeance in this case,
As a state maxim and a politick duty.
And much I fear Harcourt's impetuous zeal
Will only bring his ruin on with yours.

AMBLETUSE.

The SIEGE of CALAIS.

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AMBLETUSE.

Despair at once enlightens and inflames me,
 Why turn upon ourselves a desperate rage?
 Let us not tamely march to death, but rush
 Upon the foe, and bravely find it there.
 To die is not what fame exacts, it is
 To make our death of service to our country.
 Can inconsiderate courage be a virtue?
 Who only knows to die knows but to be
 Subdued. Let us into their camp transport
 Our arms, and there embue their conquest in
 Their blood; let's make them groan in our defeat
 And weaken what we cannot overcome.
 If by superior numbers valour needs
 Must fall, some of our enemies shall join
 Us in the grave. Our country then will reap
 This one advantage by it, that losing few
 Of its defenders t'will have fewer foes.

ALIENORA.

France has its heroines as well as England.
 Have Edward's spouse and haughty Montfort then
 Alone the right to brave the face of danger?
 Arm, arm the faithful partners of your love:
 No, keep the sword in your experienc'd hands,
 Whilst we shall hurl into the English camp
 The brands which are prepar'd to fire our walls.
 Who knows but Harcourt, when he sees our zeal,
 May join us in our desperate attempts,
 Withdraw too from our foes his conqu'ring arm,
 Retrieve his honour, and preserve his country.

ST. PIERRE. *[to the Citizens that are a going,*

Calaisians, whether do you run? let not
 Humanity be lost in heroism.

[To Alienora and Ambletuse.

Excuse me if I differ in opinion;

E

By

26 The SIEGE of CALAIS.

By long experience taught in virtue's school
To make advantage of it; in old age
Courage is less impetuous than in youth,
It loses its eclat, but is more useful.

[*To the Citizens.*]

Edward, you find, restores you to your king,
The sweetest prospect of our loyalty.
Accountable as we are to our master,
Shall we with an imprudent zeal devote
His loving subjects, which we can preserve,
Since only six of us are doom'd to die?
I feel, that you with justice will reflect,
What shame 'twould be to give them up to death:
But yet there is a way to save our honour.
I offer for the first—myself.

A U R E L I U S.

[*scarcely.*]

Your son!

Sr. P I E R R E.

Thou hast a right to share thy father's fate.

A U R E L I U S.

[*kneeling.*]

What happiness for me to have been born.

A M B L E T U S E.

With transport, O my country, see thy great
Deliverer! but Oh! in saving thee
He'll pierce thy heart. O noble sacrifice!
As full of horror as it is of glory!
My friend, receive my tears, soon shall my blood
Be mix'd with thine. I find the bravest men
[*To Manny.*]

Are the most criminal in Edward's eyes,
On whom he wreaks his fury first.
After these generous two my rank is next.

M A N N Y.

THE SIEGE of CALAIS. 29

MANNY.

[aside, shedding tears]

O heavens! why was not I in Calais born!

ALIENORA.

Enjoy, my friends, the tears of this brave Briton.
Familiar with your virtue calmly I
Admire it; but 'tis in imitating—

ST. PIERRE.

Hold, Madam, plain I see what you design;
Our different sexes have distinct their duties;
I may, without offending yours, reclaim
An honour which belongs to ours alone.
Those who have drawn their swords to guard these
walls

Have all a prior right to Edward's vengeance.

[To Manny, giving him his sword.]

Of my devoted life receive the pledge.
This sword, which fifty years has serv'd my courage,
Would soon have been an idle ornament,
Could I have parted with it in a nobler instant?

[To his son, who renders his]

Our country might have hoped for more from
thine:

Enough thou'st liv'd, since for it now thou dy'st,

*[Ambleuse gives his sword, and the Chiefs of the
Burgers offer to do the same.]*

What emulation's this! you all concur
As if to triumph you were call'd: all have
The same pretensions, but we want but three,
Let fate the contest then by lots decide;
Immortalizing three, the rest will share
The honour of aspiring to obtain it.

This done, all Calais must rejoin their king,
Regret not what you'll one day see again.
And we, to Edward giving up our lives,
Let us remit to him his acquisition.

28 The SIEGE of CALAIS

[*To Alienora.*]

Madam, farewell: Oh! let our master know
How he was serv'd, and how he was belov'd!

MANNY.

[*To Alienora.*]

'Tis Edward's order, Madam, that you here
Attend till he arrives; their pardon may,
Perhaps, ensue. I know not his designs.

ALIENORA.

What would he have of me? I promise you

[*To St. Pierre.*]

That I will ne'er consent to save your life
But on such terms as you yourself would envy.

ST. PIERRE.

Such sentiments are worthy Alienora!
To brave our woes is greater than to die.

The END of the SECOND ACT.

ACT



A C T. III.

S C E N E I.

EDWARD, HARCOURT, *English Knights and Guards.*

EDWARD.

AT length I have subdu'd this haughty city,
 And bow'd its stubborn neck beneath my yoke.
 Henceforth I may deposit here my stores,
 'Twill be a magazine of thunderbolts
 Destin'd to punish the rebellious French.
 Now England's happy shores shall be secure,
 The nest of robbers harbour'd in this port,
 No longer shall embark to desolate
 Our fertile fields. What pleasure do I feel
 In conquering this famous place? the key
 Of France, that opens me the glorious way
 To my new realms. 'Twas here that Julius Cæsar,
 Triumphant o'er the Germans, spread the seas
 With Roman eagles; and by right of war,
 To the subjected Gauls the Britons join'd;
 A people separate from all the world!
 No seas divide them now; Thames and the Seine
 Together flow in one promiscuous tide.
 [To one of the Attendants.
 To London you; and to my Parliament
 Relate my arm's success. Then let them judge
 If they preside in the exploits of kings.
 Retire.

[He retains Harcourt.]

S C E N E

SCENE II.

EDWARD, HARCOURT.

EDWARD.

To thee I owe this happy conquest,
 First-fruits of laurels victory prepares:
 To thee I owe the glory of my son;
 By thy instructions he has learnt to join
 Thy useful talents to the fire of youth—
 I must, in this excess of joy, my inmost thoughts
 To thee unbosom in regard to France.
 Thou know'st, that giving up my lawful claim
 Unto its crown I sign'd to the decree
 That plac'd it on their Valois head. 'Twas then
 That Aquitaine, my ancient patrimony,
 Required that as a vassal I must pay
 My homage to this new erected king;
 A shameful duty not to be dispens'd with!
 I blush e'en now; but I was forc'd to yield.
 I did appear—Valois flush'd with success,
 In all the swelling pride and pomp of state,
 Dazzl'd, enrag'd, sham'd, and confounded me.
 The sight of this magnificent parade
 Was proof to me of what I then was stript.
 I saw with envy both his crown and subjects,
 And then laid schemes how to assert my right;
 For when with idle form I took the oath
 Of fealty, my heart resolv'd to break it.
 Eternal plague of an ambitious soul!
 Ah! what a view!—I left my stormy isle,
 Country for ever wet with blood, that flows
 From civil broils between the throne and liberty;
 Where subjects are the tyrants of their masters,
 Who roar for happiness, and yet refuse it.
 In these disputes the senate and their king

Divide

The SIEGE of CALAIS. 31

Divide for a mistaken point of honour,
 Their common interests; mistrust ensues.
 The minister, to prop his wav'ring power,
 Is forc'd, for his own safety, to collect
 His friends, unmindful of the public welfare.
 Have I not seen myself this daring senate
 Precipitate my father from his throne?
 Affront their king, load him with chains, and then
 To a child's hand intrust the regal power?
 But shift the scene—what do I see in France,
 A king despotic, both rever'd and lov'd!
 The nobles who derive their power from him
 With grateful zeal establish his firm throne;
 A people gentle, sensible, and true,
 As if one loving family submit
 By inclination to a father's will;
 Assur'd he has at heart his children's good.
 O fortunate Valois! Is there a king
 On earth that does not envy thee such subjects?
 How sweet the task to render happy those
 Whose love we have! 'tis in thy power to make
 Thyself ador'd.

HARCOURT.

———And so it is in yours.
 With such excess of love you speak of France,
 With so much ardour wish to be lov'd,
 And yet—think of your harsh decree on Calais.

EDWARD.

When love's disdain'd it turns to hate. Can I
 Inflict a punishment too great for such
 Ingratitude, such constant vile affronts?
 Calais for a whole year stopping my exploits,
 Has it not screen'd Valois from my pursuit?
 I lost before its walls my valiant troops,
 And spent in idle schemes the precious time

To

32 The SIEGE of CALAIS.

To overcome; and now, that they're subdu'd,
I'm more their hate than Calais is their love.
Rather than be my subjects, they resolve
To perish in one dreadful conflagration,
Together with their city! to their wild
Frenzy I had given them up, but that
I was alarm'd for Alienora's fate,
Because she's dear to thee. I therefore do
Confine my vengeance to the six proscrib'd,
And for whose pardon thou do'st sue in vain.

HARCOURT.

You flatter'd me, that as a gen'rous victor ———

EDWARD.

What I just now have seen inflames my rage.
This dying people, miserable remains,
That have escap'd the scourge of war and heaven,
Still in their languid eyes shew all their pride;
With countenance serene they left their gates,
Whilst my astonish'd troops in silence gaz'd.
It seems less a surrender than a triumph.
If in their anguish they but chanc'd to turn
And cast a melancholy look on Calais,
Name but their monarch, ev'ry heart is chear'd.

S C E N E III.

EDWARD, HARCOURT, *Sir* WALTER
MANNY, ST. PIERRE, AURELIUS,
AMBLETUSE, *the three other Citizens,*
Guards. [The prisoners in chains.

MANNY.

By your command I bring you here your prisoners.

EDWARD.

E E W A R D.

Traytors, become illustrious by your crimes,
Who dare affront your conqueror and king—

ST. P I E R R E.

How! you our king!—Vain title when without
[To his Son.

The people's free consent. To you, who are
[To Edward.

My conqueror, I here resign my head.

E D W A R D.

Which thou shalt lose. Thy execution's near;
Thy scaffold, that's prepar'd, shall be the step
On which I'll mount up to the throne of France.
Perfidious wretch! 'tis then to thee I owe
The shame to find my conquest a disgrace:
My aim was to win hearts; what have I gain'd
But a vast solitude of empty walls,
A spacious city, and without a citizen.

ST. P I E R R E.

In England every English heart is yours,
Philip has left you none in France to conquer.
Calais, in this, may be of service to you,
It shews what every town in France would do.
If you expect to find one city faithful
You needs must people it with your own subjects.

E D W A R D.

Soon shall thy zeal be quench'd in thy own blood,
And be a terror to rebellious people.
But—who are they condemn'd to suffer with thee?

ST. P I E R R E.

[showing them.

John D'Aire and the two Wiffans, names, tho' now
Obscure, shall by this deed reach immortality.

F

My

My family, exclusive of all others,
Shall have the glorious fame that all aspir'd
To share.

EDWARD.

———Thy family alone!

AMBLETUSE.

It is,

It is our glory! but, without your vengeance,
We to our monarch had been quite unknown,
Our gen'rous master now will weep for us!

AURELIUS.

O royal, Sir! why was not you yourself
A witness to the fame we owe to you.
When our poor people, quitting these dear walls,
Their children's pride, and their forefathers tombs,
Now on the point of leaving us behind;
O had you seen them in their last adieu!
Ah! what a moving scene of joy and grief,
Of pity, envy, tenderness and horror!
All clung about us with expressive love—
O Sir, you never gloried more in victory!

EDWARD.

All irritates, surprises—but I'll hear
No more, from my just anger nought shall save them.

HARCOURT.

'Tis then to you that I appeal. I take
Upon me their defence. You promis'd me
To grant for my reward what e'er I ask'd:
My modest claim always retrench'd your bounty,
And left your goodness always more to offer.
Spare me the shame then to behold the blood
Of my own countrymen thus tamely spilt,
A lasting stain on my victorious deeds;
'Tis all I beg e're I retire to exile.

EDWARD.

EDWARD.

To exile—what do you mean?

HARCOURT.

I'll tell you all.

My grief: my brother's death opens my eyes,
My zeal for you made me a fratricide;
For tho' he fell not by my sword, he fell
By one then under my command. Mine is
A double guilt; fighting these three years past
Against my country, which I've fill'd with woe;
Its desolated fields, its ransack'd towns,
All shew the bloody traces of my arms,
This preys upon me. I'll no longer be
Or false to Valois or to you. I'll go,
I'll hasten to the sacred banks of Jordain,
There in the holy wars those heroes join
Whose laurels are not stain'd with brother's blood.
Whilst mine——

EDWARD.

What shameful transports draw you from
Yourself? to weep a brother's death is natural,
Yet rather weep for his mistaken zeal,
I for the country too, with patriot zeal,
Have wept; does it not then reside in me
Its chief? not in an obscure and miscreant mob,
As insignificant as vile! [*pointing at the citizens.*]

HARCOURT.

Sir!

EDWARD.

Hold.

Far from consenting to this exile, which
I much suspect—and which I must prevent;
If for your sake I should forgive this mayor

And his accomplices ; I, in return,
Expect to bind thee closer to my service.

ST. PIERRE. *[To Harcourt.]*

Listen to your remorse ; should it restore
You to our king, our death is recompenc'd.

EDWARD. *[To the guards.]*

Away with them to prison, till they know
Their doom. Do you call Alienora here.

[To one of the attendants.]

But no ; Sir Walter go yourself, desire
That she'll be pleased to give you leave t'attend her.

HARCOURT,

Why Alienora, Sir ?

EDWARD.

Thus discompos'd
Thou'dst frustrate all my secret kind designs,
Which I this day intended to disclose,
Ungrateful Harcourt ! if thou can'st forsake me,
Let prudent Alienora be thy guide,
And in thy fate decide the fate of France.
To her I leave the doom of these mad citizens,
Whose int'rests you unkindly mix with mine.

HARCOURT.

'Twill be in vain——

EDWARD.

Retire ; I see them come.

[Exit. Harcourt.]

SCENE

SCENE IV.

EDWARD, ALIENORA,

EDWARD. [*makes signs to Manny to depart*]

In one so young, so many virtues join'd
Demand the tribute due to such perfections,
Long in my heart suspended with regret;
I come to pay it now, 'tis worthy of
Your genius, and the greatness of your soul,
Whose dangerous excess I have admir'd.
To you the greatest int'rests I remit,
Mine and the state's, your father's, and your lover's,
E'en to the life of your presumptuous mayor.
Conquest, that e'er attends the justest side,
Will now gain over those whom I've subdu'd.
Already have I spread my victories
Around. I've pass'd the Dordone, Loire, and Seine;
Before I conquer'd on the plains of Cressy;
As far as Neuilly have I brought my arms.
One battle more, and Paris sees me crown'd.
Those, who the first, acknowledging my right
Become the just supporters of my throne,
Have all a title to partake its honours,
Be yours the first-fruits of my gratitude.
Brave Vienne, your father, much relies on you;
By his example, join'd to yours, I shall
Attract each loyal heart: then, as I ought,
Will I reward such services. I'll raise
Your father to the glorious post of Lord
High-Constable; and Harcourt, whom you love,
I'll make Vice-Roy of France when he receives
Your hand. London much more than Paris will
Require my presence; here you'll reign my equal.
In

38 The SIEGE of CALAIS.

In short, 'tis to the throne you may aspire,
Deserve an honour offer'd by esteem.

A L I E N O R A.

I'll deserve more—if I have your esteem
You know my answer, without my giving it.

E D W A R D.

Consult your father.

A L I E N O R A.

I consult myself,
I ne'er will make him blush.

E D W A R D.

I understand
This proud denial, but your father will—

A L I E N O R A.

Not give you one so tame. But if perchance,
Thro' weight of years, his loyalty should fail;
I'd for my father weep, and serve my king.
I own that Harcourt has my love; he shou'd
Have lost it when he chose you for his master:
But should he to obtain your proffer'd gifts
Sell his repentance now; that love should then
Disdain to honour him—e'en with a sigh.

E D W A R D.

This haughtiness surprizes me. At least,
You might have shewn your master some respect.

A L I E N O R A.

[*Rising.*

My Master! I disown the name. You know
Our laws. I Edward shall respect—if he
Respects Valois.

E D W A R D.

The SIEGE of CALAIS.

39

EDWARD. *[Rising with vivacity.]*

What laws! or rather what
Imaginary name do you oppose
To the undoubted right my mother gives.
Is't yours to cite for law a gross abuse,
Condemn'd, disclaim'd in every other clime,
Which equity and reason both lament,
And which to all your sex is an affront;
So inconsistent with the gentle manners
Of a brave people, always deem'd to be
The votaries of beauty and of fame.
Far from excluding you the regal power,
They've plac'd your empire higher than the throne,
Your sex in government surpasses ours.
'Twas by my mother I was taught to reign;
That glorious sister of your three last kings
Transmits to me the title to their crown.
Then who but I should reign in France?

ALIENORA.

A Frenchman.

When our wise ancestors first chose a king,
In his male heirs they fix'd their future masters.
Then conqu'ring soldiers carried on their shields
The bravest soldier; father of their kings:
Of a free people, such was then the will,
And this the fundamental law they made;
That France's scepter never should be held
But by a Frenchman born: and if this law,
Without disparaging our sex, debars
Us from the crown, 'twas only to prevent
The consequences of our marriage, which
Might raise, perhaps, an alien to the throne.
This law excluded you before your birth,
'Tis wrote in all our hearts, transmitted thro'
Nine ages, and three races of our kings:
A Frenchman in his prince expects a brother,

Who

Who born his country's son becomes its father,
 To us our king and country are the same,
 For whom our love and duty go together.
 This undivided zeal supports his throne,
 And makes him envied by all other kings.

EDWARD.

You but inflame my indignation more,
 'Tis I that ought to be so much lov'd,
 Ungrateful people!—but I'll make thee yield,
 Or carry my revenge up to the highest pitch.
 Chuse then this instant what my goodness offers,
 Or they shall feel the weight of my resentment;
 Your pride will be accountable for all
 The blood that's spilt. Led by mistaken virtue,
 What a presumption of a law unjust,
 That makes a stranger of the purest blood,
 Which from your monarchs flows! you doom to
 death
 The guilty citizens you might have sav'd.

ALIENORA.

I find what fame reports is but too true:
 As much insinuating for your ends
 To gain th' affection of an useful subject,
 As you're implacable in your revenge
 On those who dare disdain seduction's arts.
 I ne'er shall change, my resolution's fixt,
 Those gen'rous citizens, who for the state
 Devote themselves, become its sure support,
 They know I envy them their death. My fame
 Shall never be the ransom of their lives;
 Far more than they I shudder at their fate;
 But their firm constancy will strengthen mine.

EDWARD.

Be it then so, since it is your decree.
 Here, guards, without delay prepare the scaffold.

SCENE

The SIEGE of CALAIS. 41

SCENE V.

EDWARD, HARCOURT, ALIENORA.

ALIENORA, [*Seeing Harcourt and guards*]

Sollicit for their lives, think on the claim
They have to thy protection, thou'rt the cause
Of their distress: I die if they expire.

HARCOURT. [*To Edward*]

Can you be guilty of such cruelty?
This mayor, with so much virtue, so much valour—

EDWARD.

Valour, when in a rebel, is a crime
The more.

HARCOURT.

What do I hear?

ALIENORA.

Thy doom. Those words
[*To Edward*]

Point to his courage more than I could urge.
And as for our unhappy citizens,
I know where yet to find a fair defender,
Whose intercession you can ne'er resist;
Your gen'rous army too shall see my tears,
And force you to forego your cruel purpose;
Those valiant Britons never will consent
To be th' abbetors of such foul dishonour,
Nor see their laurels stain'd by joining with
Vile executioners: an Englishman
Withdraws his duty from a king unjust.

[*To Harcourt*]

Be faithful to our people, and fulfil

G

What

42 The SIEGE of CALAIS.

What thou hast sworn ; had it not been for thee,
For thy exploits, they had been conquerors,
And conquerors more gen'rous and humane.
Remember then thy vow ; that if their lives
Thou could'st not save—to join with them in death.

S C E N E VI.

EDWARD, HARCOURT.

EDWARD.

I fain would pardon, and am forc'd to punish,
My goodness only hardens more their hearts.
My kind intentions were to create thee
Vice-roy of France ; and to compleat thy bliss
Join Alienora's hand to thine ; all which
She has with scorn refus'd.

HARCOURT.

It was her duty.

Can I complain of her severe demands ?
If I accept your bounteous gifts, I sell
My brother's blood. In my unhappy state,
There is but one thing you can give, and I
Receive—The pardon of these wretched men,
For whom my brother lost his life ; their death
Will cover me with everlasting shame.
O pardon, pardon them, or sign my doom.
The death of Regulus dishonour'd Carthage :
Those you now sacrifice are heroes great
As he ; they die for the same glorious cause,
The good, the love, the honour of their country.
Fix not upon yourself such an affront,
And forget in one day a life of fame.
Mankind are subject all to be misled,

And

THE SIEGE of CALAIS. 43

And kings may err without a crime; but 'tis
A crime if in their errors they persist.

EDWARD.

Is it by leaving me thou think'st I'll spare
These wretches, and disarm my vengeance?
Ungrateful! no; their punishment is thine.

HARCOURT.

Ungrateful! how? what for my services
Have I receiv'd? I want to save your honour,
'Tis all the recompence I e'er shall ask;
But your reproach obliges me to add,
That in defending these illustrious citizens
I thought I had a right. On Cressy's field
Had I not gain'd th' immortal day, could you
Have had a favour to deny me here?

EDWARD.

This insolence is more than I can brook:
Did I send for you? when you shelter'd here
A fugitive, and I-reliev'd your wants:
Your boasted services were then your duty,
By you free-will you plighted me your faith;
Your sword, your blood belong to me of right,
And those that dare forget — may repent.

SCENE VII.

HARCOURT. [*Alone.*]

I'm thunder-struck — confusion to my soul!
Such are the transient honours rebels find,
Who join with foreign foes against their country;
Soon as their ends are serv'd, should we displease,
We're thrown aside, and spurn'd with indignation,
G 2 They

44 The SIEGE of CALAIS.

They take this sad advantage of our crime,
We dare not even murmur at our fate :
It is but just—should the ungrateful be
Supris'd to find ingratitude ? ye rebels !
Behold in me what traitors must expect !
Punish'd by him for whom I turn'd a traitor :
I go to join our citizens in death.
My tortur'd mind this comfort will enjoy :
In after times it will be said, had Harcourt
Less guilty liv'd he had not died so glorious.

The END of the THIRD ACT.

ACT



A C T. IV.

S C E N E I.

A Prison.

ST. PIERRE, AURELIUS, AMBLETUSE,
the three other Citizens.

ST. PIERRE.

MY Friends! my son! that ever we should be
Confined in this abode of guilt and shame!
Doubtless but others, innocent as we,
Have felt the weight of these disgraceful chains,
Which now are honour'd by our wearing them:
How many envy us our glorious fate?
All gracious heav'n! to whom I owe this blessing,
Ah! for what noble ends thou gav'st me life!
What tho' my birth was in obscurity,
My death shall beam with everlasting rays!
Our names, spread o'er each corner of our land,
Shall be transmitted down to latest times;
Whilst Calais shall, thro' us alone, receive
The universal homage of mankind.

Of our last moments let us make the most;
Let us enjoy the pleasing thoughts of what
Our country will advantage by our death.
Then o'er each other shed those tears of joy
That flow from virtue and a conscience clear.

AURELIUS.

Happy's the son who boasts of such a father !
 Guiding my youth with arduous steps to virtue.
 You clear'd the thorny paths by your example,
 And gave to duty all the charms of love.
 The will divine, that puts my death so near
 My birth, rewards you for your care of me.
 What would you more desire from a long life
 Than to behold it end with glory crown'd ?
 I from the scaffold shall grow more illustrious
 Than had I fall'n in war. My friends, alike
 Devoted in this cause, the stage of shame
 Shall prove to us the theatre of honour.

ST. PIERRE.

Alas ! methinks I see thy blood with theirs
 Together flow ; my groans re-echo thine !
 [*To Ambleuse, and points to his son.*
 Did I then form him to my heart's content
 To see such virtues fall beneath the ax ?
 Pardon these struggles in a parent's breast ;
 We may shed tears in overcoming nature,
 Which can't be stiff'd in a Frenchman's breast ;
 Tho' at the sacrifice his blood recoils,
 He marches on—he shudders—and performs it.

SCENE II.

Sir WALTER MANNY, *the six Prisoners.*

MANNY.

[*Taking St. Pierre by the hand.*

Thou brave Calaisian, worthy son of France !
 I bring a tribute offer'd to your merit
 Above what pride triumphant might expect.
 A messenger I come from our brave people
 To pay their homage to your patriot zeal :

But

The SIEGE of CALAIS. 47

But for the deference they owe their king,
A crowd of heroes would your prison throng.
But free to blame or to admire whoe'er
They please, England could wish you for a son.
[To the Citizens.]

Your love, both for your country and your laws,
Enchants a gallant nation, proud but just.
True Englishmen are all true patriots born,
In every state of life, or high or low,
Together link'd, as if one loving family.
In England born, in England bred, I feel
I do prefer it to all other countries.
You have the same attachment to your own.
I hate those hearts that have no natal love,
That see without concern their country's woes,
And stile themselves compatriotes of the world,
Ungrateful children of their mother land!
Who do not merit to be claim'd by any.

ST. PIERRE.

We frankly own that dying for our country
We thought that England would admire our fate.
Rivals, not foes, to your illustrious nation,
Our greatest praise is to have your esteem.

MANNY.

And that esteem is not an empty name,
For know, brave men, what they have done to serve
you :
Intrepid Philippa, our gracious queen,
Returns triumphant o'er the rebel Scots,
And to the king's joins her victorious troops,
At Alienora's prayer, for you she sues;
Edward, who loves her tenderly, will nought
Refuse that she requests. You've seen their son
Our glorious Prince of Wales, who now in youth
Eclipses Edward's full meridian fame,

Dreadful

48 The SIEGE of CALAIS:

Dreadful in battle, but humane in victory;
To whom his father owes the palms of Cressy;
He joins the queen and supplicates for you.
Nature and love must surely move his heart.

AURELIUS.

Ah my dear father!—then you'll live.

MANNY.

He will,
And yet enjoy the honour of his death.
But Alienora comes, and seems alarm'd.

SCENE III.

ALIENORA.

O my illustrious friends—excuse my tears.
They deign to let me take a last farewell.
The scaffold is prepar'd, ah! shocking sight!
With all th'apparel of your execution.
Harcourt enrag'd, distracted, pale, and trembling,
Away turn'd from me his disorder'd looks,
And spoke with faltering lips these dreadful words,
They are to die; then left me in despair.

MANNY.

What not the prince! what not the queen in tears
Could overcome his unrelenting rage?

ALIENORA.

Can pity enter in a tyrant's breast?
Inur'd to slaughter and to death, he sees
Without concern a hundred legions fall,
And a whole people perish for his pride.
He looks upon mankind, as on a flock
Of sheep destin'd to sacrifice at will:

And

And even you, his subjects and his friends,
He thinks you're honour'd at our lives expence.
What tears can soften an obdurate heart?
A heart long steep'd and callous grown in blood.

M A N N Y.

This is too much : I'll dare to speak the truth
And shew the freedom of an English soul,
Altho' the consequence be my disgrace.

ST. P I E R R E.

Gen'rous Sir Walter, leave us to our fate,
Involve not in our cause—

M A N N Y.

I cannot bear it,
'Tis less your danger than our own that presses ;
It covers you with glory, us with shame.

S C E N E IV.

ALIENORA, *the six Citizens.*

A L I E N O R A.

In vain Sir Walter will exert his zeal,
Edward is inexorable, all dread
His frowns ; such an ascendant has he gain'd
O'er all his troops, that even Englishmen
Are now reduc'd to whisper out their murmurs.
They blame his fury ; but it is obey'd.
He's irritated at my firm refusal—
I could, indeed, have sav'd your lives ; but you
Would blush to know the price on which they're set.

ST. P I E R R E.

I am convinc'd that you have acted right.
No more of that—what is become of Vienne?

H

A L I E N O R A.

50 The SIEGE of CALAIS.

ALIENORA.

My father labours now in your defence,
And gives me still a feeble ray of hope.
Edward, at first, in his unbounded rage,
Resolv'd that he should share your cruel death.
Cease your alarms—his valiant son, the prince
Of Wales, moved by my tears, has gain'd his life,
And sent him safely to our royal master:
He'll there attempt each means for your deliv'rance.
You know the love paternal Valois has
For all his people: yes, tho' he should yield
A province for your sakes, I know he'll do't;
Subjects, like you, are equal to a prince;
He'll pay your ransom as he would his own.

ST. PIERRE.

Just heaven! inspire him otherwise; let not
His dangerous fondness stretch too far, our death
Is necessary for our country's good.
You see what desolation's spread around
By this most bloody unsuccessful war,
And land and sea are cover'd with our spoils.
The French in sentiments will ever be
In an extream of grief or joy; which, as
It adds to bliss, so it augments their woe:
Unus'd to bear a long reverse of fortune,
And see their courage hasten their defeat,
Into despondency they poorly plunge,
And fancy that their reign is at an end.
But O my countrymen! let but one brave,
One steadfast hero rise above the frowns
Of fate, one worthy of our glorious ancestors,
He will recall those happy days when o'er
The globe our lillies floated in the air;
You'd see this now dejected people rous'd,
Admire and strive to rival him in fame.
His brave example will inflame their hearts,
And

The SIEGE of CALAIS. 51

And make them blush that ever they despair'd.
 Their constancy shall force e'en fate to change,
 And bring their country back its former glory.
 All this will be the fruits reap'd by our death;
 Whilst from our blood thousands like us shall spring.

A M B L E T U S E.

Nay more; should e'er in future times our sons
 Be forc'd to feel misfortunes, such as ours,
 Fixt in the temple of immortal fame
 Calais will be a monument of honour,
 The dear remembrance will inspire their souls,
 Awake their virtue, and support their courage;
 And e'en in citizens as low as we are
 An emulation raise to equal heroes,
 Thus may a mortal gain immortal honour,
 And after many ages past, be still
 His country's glory and its firm support.

A L I E N O R A.

O courage! virtue beyond reason's reach!
 That almost tempts me to desire your death,
 A death I envy much; Valois to it
 May owe his crown. How often does the fate
 Of kings depend upon a single subject?
 Harcourt betrays, and D'Artois left his master;
 A mayor of Calais props his tott'ring throne.
 Proud monarchs of the world be this your lesson,
 To watch the welfare of your meanest people.
 Sometimes a poor man by oppression dies,
 That might, perhaps, have liv'd to save his country.
 Ah; see the guards approach; Edward will fate
 His fury e'er Valois can intercede.

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 And gives me still a feeble ray of hope.
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 His country's glory and its firm support.

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 Proud monarchs of the world be this your lesson,
 To watch the welfare of your meanest people.
 Sometimes a poor man by oppression dies,
 That might, perhaps, have liv'd to save his country.
 Ah; see the guards approach; Edward will fate
 His fury e'er Valois can intercede.

52. The SIEGE of CALAIS.

SCENE V.

ALIENORA, *six Citizens, an English Officer, and*
Guards.

OFFICER.

Madam, retire, the king has seal'd their doom,
Fly from this dreadful place, or else you must
Behold them led to present execution.

ALIENORA.

O yes—let's fly—support me or I faint.

[To her attendant.]

I see the horrid scene—O father help!

[To St. Pierre.]

You are my father, you that pointed out
To me the paths of virtue.

ST. PIERRE.

Those of courage.

ALIENORA.

That courage fails; I've nothing now but tears.
Why does not Harcourt force the same for him;
Alas! what must the father, son, and all
The family together perish? O heavens!

ST. PIERRE.

Madam, farewell.

ALIENORA.

Receive my last embrace.

Exit.

SCENE

SCENE VI.

ST. PIERRE, *the Citizens and Officer.*

ST. PIERRE.

Are we to follow now?

OFFICER.

I wait as yet

For the last fatal orders.

ST. PIERRE.

Why those tears?

OFFICER.

Ah! what true Briton can behold your fate
Without concern? and to encrease our grief
See virtue smiling on its executioners!

ST. PIERRE.

They come; let us embrace — I'll march the first,
Ye martyrs for your country follow me;
The palm's prepar'd to crown — ah! Harcourt here!

SCENE VII.

HARCOURT, ST. PIERRE, *six citizens,*
officer and guard.

HARCOURT.

[*to the officer.*]

Sir, I have orders from the king to speak
In private with the prisoners. [*officers and guards de-*

Faithful sons

part.

Of France, — (Oh were I worthy of that name!)

I see in your disdainful eyes my just

Rebuke;

The SIEGE of CALAIS

Rebuke; it is what I deserve. I am
 The cause of yours and of my brother's death,
 And what is worse, I fear our country's ruin.
 To make some compensation for my crime
 And to alleviate your distress, I bring
 A pardon for your son.

ST. PIERRE.

All-gracious heav'n!

HARCOURT.

'Twere shocking that one family alone
 Should suffer for the rest.

ST. PIERRE.

Does any other then
 Present himself to suffer death for him?

HARCOURT.

No doubt; and one that has a greater right.
 [*To Aurelius.*]

Depart; th' exchange is made; to Philip haste;
 His camp is near. Go, and preserve a life
 More useful to your country than your death.
 Go, and assure my king that Harcourt will
 Ere yet he dies convince him of his faith.

AURELIUS.

What I! forsake my father — no my lord.

HARCOURT.

'Tis Edward's orders that you strait depart.

AURELIUS.

Who is the virtuous unjust man that dares
 To rob me of my death?

ST. PIERRE.

ST. PIERRE.

Canst thou mistake,
'Tis Harcourt.

HARCOURT.

I!

ST. PIERRE.

Yes, you; I find
Your project, which I blame altho' admire.
This day you swore to join with us in death.
Edward is cheated, but I'm not deceiv'd.

HARCOURT.

Suppose 'twere true; is it not just to save
The innocent, and let the guilty perish?

AURELIUS.

Good god! what I consent —

ST. PIERRE.

And could you think —

HARCOURT.

It is his duty to consent, and yours
To force him to it. I know why you refuse.
The time is precious; hear what I've to say.
It is not thee, thou venerable man,
That I attempt to save; thy honour would
Be hurt, if this illustrious sacrifice,
Thy work, should ever be perform'd without thee,
But why thy son be immolated too?
Just in his prime? where is the father then?
Does not fond nature struggle in thy heart?
Can you consent to see such valour fall?
This growing hero, whose beginning shines
So bright an earnest of his future fame.

His

His virtues are a debt you owe the state;
 His king, his country claim him for their own.
 Without his death your glory is the same.
 It is but just that I should take his place;
 Whatever are my crimes 'twill clear them all.
 Whilst your brave son shall for his country reap
 The glorious fruits that from your death will spring.
 Ah! with what zeal our troops will follow him
 Whose father sacrific'd himself for them!
 And what a field of glory opens to his view!
 See him avenge his father and his family.
 See him attain the highest rank of heroes.
 See from him rise a noble race, that will
 To future ages last a monument
 Of honour to the flower-de-luce of France;
 All which will perish with your valiant son.
 I see you're mov'd; those tears—away brave youth,
 Here, take my sword, and give it back its honour.

AURELIUS.

Shall I impose on Edward, and forswear
 Myself? Shall I my dying father leave?
 I that still harbour hopes some turn of pity
 May save his life and be content with mine.

HARCOURT.

You but encrease his woes by joining yours.

AURELIUS.

And I alleviate mine in sharing his.

HARCOURT.

Hopes of revenge—

AURELIUS.

The horror to survive—

HARCOURT.

The SIEGE of CALAIS.

HARCOURT.

Forbids thy death.

AURELIUS.

Obliges me to follow.

HARCOURT.

Dost thou not know our lives are not our own;
To our dear country they belong.

AURELIUS.

Then like
A hero live; I'll like a soldier die.

ST. PIERRE.

O my brave son, my worthy son!— and you,
To Harcourt.]
Let not remorse encourage blind despair:
Do you imagine that your death can e'er
Acquit you to your king? far from it; no,
It would but add to your ingratitude,
Your life, your loyalty is what he wants,
And not a useless victim by your death;—
That would augment, and not repair your crime:
Haste to your country's aid, from its torn breast
Draw forth the shafts plung'd by your cruel hand,
Let me in dying have the satisfaction
To have restor'd it back its firmest bulwark,
The greatest and most warlike of its sons:
Our ardent youth have nothing of the warrior
But their courage; your long experience join'd
To so much prudence in the art of war
Gives you th' advantage above all others.
Employ those talents in your country's cause,
Let our young heroes learn of you that art
Which you have taught to our ungen'rous victor.

I

Go!

34 **The SIEGE of CALAIS.**

Go, dry the tears of our afflicted France,
Revenge its wrongs, and die its worthy son!

HARCOURT.

Alas! will France confide in me again?

SCENE VIII.

To them an Officer and Guards,

OFFICER.

The order's come, I lead them to their doom.

HARCOURT. *[To St. Pierre and his Sons]*

O cruel men you triumph—and I'm lost!
Your constancy deprives me of my hopes:
But e're you die come and behold my death.

ST. PIERRE.

Live for your king—and we together die.

The END of the FOURTH ACT.

ACT



A C T. V.

S C E N E I.

EDWARD, Sir WALTER MANNY.

EDWARD.

I'VE weigh'd your reasons ; you are in the right ;
 'Tis sometimes politic to wink at guilt.
 I'll look on Harcourt's rash impetuosity.
 As the blind transport of excessive grief :
 Had it not been for thee, my just resentment
 Would have depriv'd him of his chief command,
 But these Calaisians, in my camp detain'd,
 May through his means return into their city.
 I cannot bribe too high to gain them o'er,
 The crown of France depends on their compliance.
 This proud, tho' conquer'd people, will throughout
 The land teach others to condemn my right.
 But chief of all let us attract this mayor :
 In vulgar minds life is of little moment
 When pass'd in low obscurity ; but when
 To grandeur it is rais'd, they feel its value,
 Weakness once known is easily o'ercome.
 Such will defy the most tormenting death
 That may be won by generosity.
 Send for this mayor ; the scaffold he has seen
 With all it's horrors : now let him behold
 The glories that surround the throne.

MANNY.

I fear

I 2

He'll

60 **THE SIEGE OF CALAIS.**

He'll not comply — O royal Sir, should he
 Resist your profer'd gifts — your soul is great,
 But haughty — O beware of your own vehemence.

SCENE II.

EDWARD, St. PIERRE.

EDWARD. *(Sits down.)*

Proud burgher, thou who madly tak'st for heroism
 A hot enthusiastick zeal, approach.
 Thou seest a king whom love of virtue warms,
 That condescends to admire it e'en in thee:
 I waive the wrath thy stubbornness has rais'd,
 And still remit thy fate unto thyself;
 In pitying an error that misguides thee,
 I deign to enlighten what I ought to punish.
 Hear what I've done for thy poor fellow citizens;
 Victims of hunger and of savage pride,
 Fainting and spent they drop'd along the road,
 Which soon had been their grave but for my care.
 My pity now supports them in my camp,
 And gives them strength to join my enemy.
 This unexpected bounty seems to move them;
 'Tis in thy power to improve their tenderness.
 A word from thee, and they'll return to Calais.
 Thy life is the reward. Thy noble spirit
 Is pleasing to my heart; and what is more
 My son desires to find a friend in thine.
 Yield to the times and to the conqu'ror's law,
 Till fate and treaties fix which is thy master.
 Think'st thou thy execution e'er will raise
 An emulation to partake that honour?
 Which of your lords will follow the example?
 Be undeceiv'd, and take it for a truth,
 Successful kings alone have faithful courtiers.

For

THE SIEGE OF CALAIS. 81

For should I mount the throne, thou wilt be call'd
In future ages a rebellious traitor,
Who suffer'd justly what the law inflicted.

ST. PIERRE.

Dread sir, I had no other view in what
I've done but for the welfare of my country,
And if by your success it needs must fall,
My greatest glory is to perish with it.
I find it is not come to that as yet;
Why take such pains thus to seduce a man
So mean as I? 'tis plain you are afraid
One spark of virtue may enkindle up
A flame amidst a gen'rous feeling nation.
The die is cast. Should e'er my future conduct
Belie the former actions of my life,
Those paths of honour I have pointed out,
Tho' I forsake them they'd be still pursu'd.
Your goodness will no doubt demand our praise;
But Frenchmen fight the foe whom they admire.
Your generosity will spur their valour,
In hopes, as victors, to repay your bounty.

EDWARD.

In what light do you then regard my favours?

ST. PIERRE.

I cannot have your favour and esteem;
If one I take, the other I must lose.
Count d'Artois who for you forsook his King—
In loading him with honours you despis'd him;
Me you shall praise, whilst loading me with chains.
What! do you think it then an idle form,
That oath which you and I to Valois swore?
And which I'll sacred keep as long as life.
I've not like you a right to break my faith.
Can policy so far debase the throne

When

62 The SIEGE of CALAIS.

When probity would give it so much lustre?
Valois ne'er broke his word. If he's deceiv'd
By jealous rivals, must he blush for them?
How can I swerve from virtue, when my king
Is still before my eyes the faithful model?

EDWARD.

[rising.]

'Tis well. Haste to the scaffold then, since 'tis
Thy wish; thy vanity may cost thee dear.
What does rebellion authorise contempt?
Yet will I humble thy presumptuous soul.
Inhuman father! ere that thou art rack'd
Thou shalt behold thy son in tortures die;
Thou art his executioner; his screams
Shall wreak my vengeance in thy stubborn heart.

ST. PIERRE.

O my dear son! this is indeed a trial —
But thou wouldst suffer more to see me guilty.

EDWARD.

O cruel man!

ST. PIERRE.

This is time lost. In vain
You threaten, and in vain you sooth. I blush
To see you thus demean yourself. Methinks
The eyes of all the world are fixed on us,
Edward, that great, that powerful king, employs
His utmost skill to bribe an honest man.
You force me — to be greater than yourself.

EDWARD.

[Manny, with the guards.]

Drag him with th'other criminals to death.

SCENE

THE SIEGE OF CALAIS.

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SCENE III.

EDWARD, ALIENORA, MANNY, *Herald*
at arms, and guards.

ALIENORA. [*to Manny, going off with St Pierre.*]

O! for a while suspend the fatal sacrifice.

To Edward.

[*Manny, &c. go off.*]

As I departed hence, by your command,
I met this Herald which our monarch sends
With happy news, if we believe report,
Concerning our proscribed citizens.
This letter, wrote by Valois' hand, contains
Such proffer'd honourable terms, as will
Undoubtedly procure their lives and liberty.

EDWARD.

[*reads.*]

"Thou, who pretend'st to be the lawful heir
"To France's crown, and yet in frenchmens blood
"Their country overflow'st, spare but the lives
"Of the heroick citizens of Calais,
"I'll offer thee the means to mount my throne.
"Let thee and I in single combat meet,
"And not involve our subjects in our quarrel;
"But by our swords alone decide our right."

This is as I could wish — down with the scaffold;
Reward this herald, and to him remit
My captives; quick; I give them to Valois.
He now is worthy to dispute the throne.
To the Herald.

Tell him to fix the time, and chuse the place;
Haste, I am ready to obey the summons,

ALIENORA.

[*stopping the herald.*]

Inform our countrymen of what our king

Intends;

64 **THE SIEGE of CALAIS.**

Intends; they know it not. O happy people!
Your monarch will expose himself for you;
Who then can wonder at your love for him?
To Edward.]

This challenge, sir, which all must needs admire,
Will never have our nation's free consent —
Count Melun here!

SCENE IV.

EDWARD, ALIENORA, MELUN, MANNY,
Herald, and Guards.

ALIENORA, *[to Melun.]*

Ah! count, have you then learnt
For what design our monarch has deceiv'd us?

MELUN.

I have, and made the mist'ry known; and now
I come by the joint cry of the whole army
To disavow our king's imprudent valour,
And stop what he so ardently desires.
To Edward.]

In vain my king and you the lists prepare,
His subjects hearts will overleap the bounds.
Not that they are alarm'd for the success;
But should he overcome! where is the balance?
The crown of France he places in one scale;
Have you put that of England in the other?
Have you consulted with your Parliament?
That just and jealous corps. We hazard all;
What do you risk in this unequal strife?
I know that Valois rates his subjects blood
Above the price of all your provinces.
'Tis ours, through love, to spill for him that blood
He fain would save at hazard of his own;

But,

But, subject to the law that made him king,
He may dispose of all except himself.
What right has he then to transfer the crown,
And to an alien too? could you extirpate
Philip, and all the royal race of Capet,
You would not be the hearer to the throne,
The last of Frenchmen have a right before you,
I speak our nation's voice—my duty's done.

SCENE V.

EDWARD, ALIENORA, Sir WALTER
MANNY.

EDWARD. [*enraged!*]

Arise ye furies, and inflame my rage!
What! is this combat then between two rivals
No more than an imaginary bliss?
Ungrateful France! whom I did really love,
I'll give thee cause to justify thy hate,
Yes, what I can't subdue I will destroy.
Paris, thou first shall feel my powerful wrath,
I'll reign within thy walls, or on their rubbish;
From hence I'll issue forth my stores of death,
And desolation spread throughout the land,
Ransack, ravage, fire and sword! I'll make
This kingdom all one dreadful dreary desert.
Away with the vile citizens to torture,
Their death is but the earnest of my vengeance.
[*Falls into his chair spent with rage.*]

MANNY.

But, Sir, if—

EDWARD.

Do as I command.

K

ALIENORA.

64 **THE SIEGE OF CALAIS.**

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[Falls into his chair spent with rage.]

MANNY.

But, Sir, if—

EDWARD.

Do as I command.

K ALIENORA.

66 The SIEGE of CALAIS.

ALIENORA.

O rage!

O monstrous rage! that makes a man a tyger.
Unjust ambition all this springs from thee.

EDWARD. *[Perceiving Manny not to go.]*

Didst thou not hear me then? to death, I say.

MANNY.

Long under you I've led your valiant troops,
But never headed public executioners;
Your reputation is more dear to me
Than all your favours. I am not your slave,
I am an English subject, and will speak.
With me my king deposited his fame;
If you deprive me of that sacred trust
I go for England—there to conceal my grief.

EDWARD.

To Manny.]

Away. Go you and see that I'm obey'd.

[To one of the Guards.]

[Manny and Officer go.]

ALIENORA.

What Harcourt leaves you and Sir Walter too!
O mayor of Calais thou shalt be reveng'd,
Thy rival now shall answer for thy death.

EDWARD.

Do you then place in competition with
A king so low a subject?

ALIENORA.

Yes, I do.

A loyal subject dying for his king
Is greater than a king, who, cruel in success,
For empty pride would set the world on fire.

What

What are you here but vassal to my king?
 That may be call'd to answer for the blood
 Which you have spilt. You'll by rebellion lose
 Your Aquitaine, which will revert unto
 Our crown. Your heirs, stript of their patrimony,
 Will curse the author of so great a loss.
 You! born to be the love, th' example of
 Mankind, shall prove a scourge to your own England.
 Divine humanity, in tears expiring,
 Will place to your account an age of woes.

S C E N E VI.

EDWARD, HARCOURT, ALIENORA,
Guards.

HARCOURT. *[To Edward.]*

You have a lawful plea now to exert
 Your rage; thro' me your pris'ners are escap'd,
 By this they're near our royal master's camp.

EDWARD.

Perfidious! darest thou then—

ALIENORA.

He's mine again!

EDWARD.

What! those proud citizens that brav'd their death
 Now stoop to save their lives by vile deceit?

HARCOURT.

They were deceiv'd by me. I saw them not.
 Soon as the herald was departed hence,
 I publish'd that you had receiv'd their ransom,

I forg'd an order as from you, and then
 Pres'd their departure before Count Melun went.
 Your troops, with one acclaim, pronounce their joy
 For this delivery; and that confirms their error.
 Do you not hear the shouts? 'tis to applaud
 The humane virtues I proclaim'd in you.
 For those that I have sav'd I give my life,
 'Tis fit that I should expiate the woes
 I caus'd; it is my duty—'tis my will.
 O let in one accumulated heap
 Their tortures fall on me.

EDWARD.

Thou do'st deserve

Them all.

HARCOURT.

I know I do, but 'tis not now
 When I preserve you from eternal shame,
 But when I left my country and my king,
 And taught their enemies to conquer them,
 To Aliénora.]

I weep for shame. O tell my royal master
 I died his subject—worthy of the name.
With earnestness.]

Here in your hands I now abjure that oath
 Which in my rage I took for England's monarch.

EDWARD.

Didst thou not swear t'was to thy lawful king?

ALIÉNORA.

Perjury is a virtue when it frees
 From crime.

EDWARD.

Your love creates his crime

And

And ruin too.

ALIENORA.

To fame and not to love
He sacrifices now. But love assumes
Its power; tho' not his guide, 'tis his reward,
Harcourt, I give thee back my love and faith,
Which I will prove by not surviving thee.
Whom do I see!

EDWARD.

Oh! heavens!

SCENE VII. *and lost.*

EDWARD, HARCOURT, ALIENORA,
MANNY, ST. PIERRE, AURELIUS, AM-
BLETUSE, *the other three Citizens, and Guards.*

HARCOURT.

What is it you?

ST. PIERRE.

I found out your deceit. Judge, royal Sir,
If we were in the plot concern'd; along
We went, regretting our illustrious death,
When Count Melun o'ertook us in our march.
His looks at sight of us! his joy confus'd,
Rais'd my suspicion. I desir'd, I press'd
To know the truth; his candour own'd it all.
O Valois! king indeed, what an example!
Expose your life—resume your victims, Sir.

[To Edward.

What e'er your project on our country is,
You've learnt to know its monarch and his subjects.

EDWARD.

The SIEGE of CALAIS.

EDWARD.

[Leaning on his chair.

I'm all astonishment!

HARCOURT.

[To St. Pierre.

In death we'll join;

You shan't in all prevent my just desires.

*To Alienora.]*Farewel. Come friends. *[Taking St. Pierre by the hand.*AURELIUS. *[Looking at Edward and his father.*

I yield to my affright.

O Sir.

[Falling at Edward's feet.

ST. PIERRE.

[Looking back.

What! kneeling to another than thy king!

AURELIUS.

[To Edward,

I kneel, I do implore ('tis all I ask)

To die the first far from my father's fight;

O Sir, remember yours, had you been present

When the tormenting red hot irons were

Prepar'd to pierce his entrails; could you see

The cruel ruffians, heedless of your tears,

Commit the barb'rous the shocking deed?

Can you be cruel—who have been distress'd.

ST. PIERRE.

[Taking up his son.

Arise, for shame.

EDWARD.

Where am I? ah! what murmur!

What struggle in my breast?—what tender call!

It is the voice of nature.

ALIENORA.

Answer then

That call. Happy the world when kings will hear it.

EDWARD.

EDWARD.

I'm overcome in this affecting strife!
 What prepossession hurried me away?
 'Tis gone. How many heroes here surround me?
 Ah! by what virtues do I stand arraign'd?
 My wild ambition has misled me, glory
 Idol of kings! the people are thy victims!
 It is but just that on myself I should
 Inflict my punishment—I ought—I will.
 Ah! Valois, what a sacrifice for thee!
 But no matter—Ye virtuous subjects live,
 Depart, and be the pledges of the peace.
 If by such virtues I could be inflam'd,
 No wonder I was jealous of your king.
To Harcourt.]

And thou who hast preserv'd them from my rage,
 Thou giv'st me back to honour—and I give
 Thee to thyself. Return then to thy king,
 And let him judge by such a gift if I
 Intend to be his foe. These three years past
 Fortune has strove in vain to humble him.
 A faithful people is unconquerable.
 When over Frenchmen I aspir'd to reign
 It was their hearts I wanted to subdue:
 If I must make an iron rod my scepter
 I here renounce their crown.

MANNY.

Now you're my king
 Indeed! this is the pride of a true English heart.

EDWARD.

[Taking Manny by the hand.]

By greater virtues shall thy king be known,
 And France may yet regret me for its master.

ST. PIERRE.

No such regret you e'er will have from us,

But

The SIEGE of CALAIS.

But you will have respect, esteem, and love;
 Let me be first to show my gratitude;
 Proud of a glorious death I was; but you
 Have giv'n a more than life—my country's happiness.

ALIBONORA.

May you and Valois ever be united;
 Such hearts were form'd to love each other.
 Recall, by your examples, sweet Humanity,
 Long banish'd from our climes; fix here again!
 Her throne; parent of virtue! may she be
 The queen of kings and umpire of the world.

THE END.

M A N N Y

Now, your grace, King

Indeed! this is the bride of a true English heart.

[Taking leave of the king.] E D W A R D.

The greater virtues shall thy king be known.

And France may yet regret me for its master.

St. P I E R R E.

No such regret you e'er will have from us.

But

HISTORICAL NOTES

On the SIEGE of CALAIS.

Mr. de Belloy is of opinion, that he ought to begin the notes relating to his play, with an account of the event on which it is founded; he says, "the public will be pleased to see the narrative as it appears in Froissard, a cotemporary writer, whose obsolete language seems to bear the stamp of truth. I shall only, adds he, retrench some useless circumstances, and alter such words as are become unintelligible to some readers." For the same reason, the translator will, without deviating from the simplicity of Froissard's stile, attempt to give his thoughts to an english reader, as close and as concise as he can.

FROISSARD'S ACCOUNT.

John de Vienne, governor of the city, made a signal from the battlements for a parley. The King of England hearing this, sent Sir Walter Manny and Mr. Bassett; John de Vienne said unto them, dear Sirs, you are valiant knights in feats of arms, and know that the King of France has here sent us, and commanded us to defend this town and castle, we have done our utmost; but now we are perishing for want of food, unless the generous King your master takes pity on us, for which we desire you to beseech him, and that he will give us leave to retire just as we are; and let him have the town and castle, with all the riches therein, of which he will find enough. To which Sir Walter Manny made reply, we are sure of our King's intention, for he told it us. Know then, that it is not his design to let you thus depart, he insists that you submit at discretion, to spare or punish as he thinks fit. The governor answered, those

terms are too hard ; we are here knights and squires but few in number, that have served our King as you would yours on like occasion ; but there is nothing we will not suffer rather than consent that the lowest of our citizens should be worse treated than ourselves ; but we hope better from the King of England's goodness. Sir Walter returned to the King, who persisted in their compliance. I am afraid, great Sir, replied Manny, that you are in the wrong, for you give a very bad example ; for whatever troops you send to garrison your towns, they will not go with their wonted spirit, for if you put any of these people to death, they must on like occasion expect the same usage. All the King's Barons that were there present were of the same opinion. Well, said the King, I wont be one against all ; you may tell the governor of Calais, that the greatest favour I shall shew him is, that he shall send to me six of their chief citizens, bare-headed, with halters round their necks, to be disposed of according to my will ; the others I take to mercy. Sir Walter returned to John de Vienne, who assembled the burghers, and reported to them the king's words. Then the women and children and all began to weep and wail ; no heart so hard but what needs must have been moved. Then rose up Eustache de St. Pierre, *the richest burgher of the city*, who thus spoke ; Gentlemen great and little, it would be sad indeed to let these people die for hunger or otherwise, when it is in our power to prevent it ; and it would be great favour in our King's eyes to hinder such mishap. I have in my own right, so great a hope, in dying, to save these people, that I offer myself to be the first. As soon as he had spoke they all adored him out of tenderness. Then got up John d'Aire, a very honest and rich citizen ; and after him James Wissant, who said he would accompany his two cousins ; so did likewise Peter Wissant his brother, and so a fifth, and then a sixth. They led the six victims out of the gates, and the governor John de Vienne said unto Manny, I deliver to you, by the consent of our people, these six citizens, and I do protest unto you, *that they are the most noted, and most honourable, of all the corporation of the city of Calais* ; be so good as to beseech the King your master not to let them die. I cannot say what may happen, answered Sir Walter, but I will do my best endeavours. He then presented them to the King, amidst a crowd of english lords and knights, who wept for pity. Edward looked upon them with angry eyes, for much he hated the people of Calais ; and ordered them *to be beheaded*.

All the Lords beseeched the King to grant their pardon, but he would not listen to them. Then Sir Walter Manny said again, O gentle sir, refrain your passion, you are much famed for nobleness and courtesy, do not do any thing now to diminish

nish your renown ; for every body says it would be a great piece of cruelty if you was so hard hearted as to put to death these honest burghers, who, of their own accord have offered themselves to die, to save the rest. To which the King replied, master Walter, it shall not be otherways, so send for the *chop-head* *. The people of Calais have destroyed so many of mine, that I think it is but right that some of them should suffer also.

The Queen of England, who was with child, kneeled down, and weeping said, O gentle sir, since I have crossed the sea in great peril, I have nothing requested of you ; now I humbly do entreat you, for the sake of the son of the blessed Mary, and for the love you have for me, to pardon these six men. The King looked at her for a moment in silence, and then he said, ah ! madam, I wish you were any where else than here ; but you sollicit so movingly, that I cannot disappoint you ; so do with them what you please. Then the Queen had them led to her appartments, bad their halters be taken off, and ordered them cloaths ; and, after a good dinner, gave them each six nobles (crowns of gold) and sent them safe out of the camp.

Reflections on this Narrative.

Nothing can be plainer nor better stated. The facts are all attested by the best historians, french and English ; see Mezerai, Daniel, Villaret, Smollet, and particularly Rapin de Thoiras, who of all authors is the most partial in Edward's favour. " Without any regard to the intercession of the Prince of Wales, and that of his whole court, the King ordered, says he, the execution of the six citizens of Calais. But notwithstanding this determination, he could not see a consort he so tenderly loved, and to whom he had so many obligations, &c." Rapin ends by saying, that this action did the greatest honour to the Queen of England.

Mr. de Beloy proves, I think beyond dispute, the veracity of Froissard's account, which some foreigner of distinction, as he was informed, seemed to doubt of. But as this would be but little interesting to an English reader, no more than some criticisms which he answers with great propriety, the translator will only continue such historical remarks as are relative to his tragedy.

* *Le cope-tete.*

N O T E S.

The succours which the king himself has brought.

Philip de Valois came indeed with a very numerous army to the relief of Calais. But Edward's camp was not to be attacked. In vain every stratagem was employed to entice him out. They ravaged all the neighbouring country, Cassel was set on fire; the Flemings, who were joined to the English, beheld without emotion their towns in flames, and remained quietly in the entrenchments. Philip made an attack on an advanced tower near the sea, which he carried; but could not make any further progress. It is easy to perceive, that when I make use of this little advantage as a general action, my design was to draw near and appropriate to it the principal events of the battle of Cressy; such as King Philip's being wounded, the death of John of Harcourt, &c. &c.

As if another Calais rose about our walls.

It is agreed by all historians, that Edward erected in wood, between the ramparts of Calais, the river, and the sea, another town, where the English army passed the winter, and which was better fortified than even Calais itself.

A minister's resentment caus'd his rage.

Whatever the greatest part of French historians averr, it is not evident that Godfrey of Harcourt was really an accomplice of Oliver de Clifton, and the Lords of Brittany, who were beheaded for having conspired against Philip de Valois. Abbe Choissy seems to be of a quite different opinion. Smollet, after other English historians, pretends that this nobleman's disgrace was the consequence of a violent quarrel with the marshal de Briquetec, in which he was so rash as to draw his sword in the king's presence. La Roque, biographer of the House of Harcourt, gives an account of this quarrel in which love had a share. Godfrey would fain have married the daughter of the lord du Moley, and the marshal's son was his rival. As these circumstances could not enter into my tragedy, I have represented Harcourt's revolt in a less disadvantageous light, and made

made him appear guilty; as we have seen in our days a great Hero, of much more importance, and much more loved to his country.

With them
As yet the baneful secret rests.

Most historians agree, that the English were the first that made use of cannon; which they fix on the memorable day of Cressy. Mr. de Voltaire, in his Universal History, particularises several well-grounded doubts concerning this pretended period of the invention of artillery; but that poet-philosopher would in a tragedy have followed the received opinion, which would have afforded him so many descriptive beauties; I have made use, as he would have done, of the sight that poetry is in possession of.

A second harvest has enrich'd our plains.

According to the annals of Calais the siege lasted a whole twelvemonth; having begun August the 30th 1346, and ended in the latter part of the same month 1347. Edward, during the course of the siege, received a reinforcement of 30,000 men, headed by the marquis of Juliers and the count of Namur. Another of 17,000 victorious troops, that crossed the sea with Philippa his spouse, after they had, under the command of that heroine, overcome and taken prisoner the king of Scotland. Nevertheless, with all these united supplies, he was not able to take the town otherwise than by famine; and the wretched inhabitants were reduced, for some days, to live upon horses, dogs, and even cats and mice.

Commands us to dissolve th' allegiance, which
We owe our lawful monarch.

Rapin, as well as other historians, assures, that Edward really did summon John de Vienne to surrender, as to the lawful king of France. That prince had assumed this title in his private letters, as well as in his letters patent to the duke of Brabant, ever since the year 1337, eight years after he had solemnly done homage to Philip de Valois. He dated a re-

Prince Eugene,

script

script in 1340, addressed to the inhabitants of St. Omer, as likewise of the famous challenge he sent to Philip, in the first year of our reign in France, and the fourteenth in England. This seems to be very ill calculated, for if he was king of France, he must have been so from the death of Charles le Bel, which was twelve years. And is it not then surprising to see Edward treat as his equal king John his prisoner, if he had looked upon him as an usurper? His conduct, always contradictory, proves how little he depended on his pretended right.

✱

O! let it be in flames our funeral pile.

I do not know that this proposal was ever made in Calais. It is certain that it was made and approved of in Orleans, at the time of that famous siege that was raised by count Dunois, and the intrepid maid of Orleans, Joan of Arc. Mezerai relates, that at the siege of Rouen, the inhabitants were on the point of rushing sword in hand into the English camp, after having fired the town. I make use, in the second act, of this courageous resolution, which does not seem unnatural in extreme despair.

✱

*Provided he permits us to depart,
Our soldiers, wives, and children.*

I think I have hit upon a truth that has escaped the historians, who did not reflect on what they wrote, when they advance, that it was Edward that banished from Calais its inhabitants: it is not likely that a prince who styled himself King of France, had begun by driving away his new subjects from the very first town he had subdued; that was not the way to gain hearts; but the very words of the capitulation, as related by Foissard and others, verify the contrary; for it was the inhabitants themselves that desired they might quit the town, and retire to their lawful master. Recollect what John de Vienne demanded in express terms of Sir Walter Manny; *that he will give us leave to retire just as we are, and let him have the town and castle, with all the riches therein, &c.* nothing is more evident.

✱

*I, that enticed him to this war, spite of
The voice of his august and prudent senate.*

The parliament of England granted Edward but small subsidies in the beginning of this war, and had it not been for the assistance

assistance of the Flemings, and of the provinces of France long in Edward's possession, he never would have claimed his pretended rights. It was Robert d'Artois that advised the English monarch to this war, but it was Godfrey of Harcourt that determined him to make his descent in Normandy, where fortune began to favour him; for till then he had been unsuccessful in Guienne, Brittany, and even in Flanders, where he was forced to raise the siege of Cambrai, and that of Tournai.

✱

Shall Edward's spouse and haughty Monfort then.

The countess of Monfort, at the siege of Hennebon, put in execution what Alienora here proposes; she took advantage of a fally, and set the besiegers tents on fire, and by this disorder, destroyed great part of their army. See, Argentrè on this *Heroine*, in whom was found the valour of a soldier with the talents of a general.

✱

Let fate the contest then by lots decide.

The annals of Calais testify, according to ancient memoirs, that the fifth and sixth burgher were drawn by lot, amongst a hundred that offered themselves, in seeing the generous behaviour of the four first; and very likely, by reason of the number, their names have not been preserved as the others.

✱

'Twas here that Julius Cæsar.

It is not certain that Calais was the *Portus Itius*, from whence Cæsar embarked for England; but it is next to a demonstration, that part of his fleet assembled there for that purpose.

✱

*The sight of this magnificent parade,
Was proof to me of what I then was stript.*

This is a fact; and the consequence I draw from it is as true. Edward was not sensible, till the moment of his homage, what a sacrifice he fancied to have made of his rights to the crown of France.

Q! fortunate

O! fortunate Valois!

Philip de Valois was surnamed the fortunate, on account of his accession to the throne, of which there seemed so little likelihood, being no nearer than first cousin to three of Philip le Bel's sons, whom he survived. However, it was very natural that a king of Edward's temper, should prefer the throne of France to that of England. I believe there are many kings would speak what I make Edward say.

*Spare me the shame then to behold the blood
Of my own countrymen thus tamely spilt.*

Godfrey of Harcourt put a stop to the ruin of Caën, which Edward had ordered to be set on fire. I represent him here as he was then in the same circumstance.

'Twas by my mother I was taught to reign.

Isabel was certainly fitter to reign than Edward II. Her son may talk of her with praise, since he never owned, publicly at least, that she had any ways contributed to her husband's murder.

*Had I not gain'd
Th' immortal day on Cressy's field.*

Harcourt, since Edward's descent in Normandy, was made marshal general of the english army. La Roque says, even constable, (generalissimo). He gained several victories before that of Cressy. On that memorable day he commanded the first line of Edward's army, with the prince of Wales, then fifteen years old, (he was born in 1331.) This first line alone won the battle. The king of England said himself, *I will have the boy gain his spurs, that the day may be his, and the honour remain to him and to those to whom I have given him in charge.* Could any thing be more honourable for Harcourt than this acknowledgement.

Dreadful

Dreadful in battle, but humane in victory,

I am sorry my subject would not permit me to bestow more praises on that famous Prince of Wales, generally known by the name of the Black Prince; a much greater hero than his father. I could only give a faint sketch of his magnanimity, in making him save count Vienne without his father's consent, at the hazard of offending him. This is absolutely of a piece with that young Prince's character; and his life witnesses it in more than one instance. When he had taken prisoner the valiant Du Guesclin, at the battle of Navaret, Edward sent him word to keep him close confined. But the Prince of Wales, unknown to his father, set him at liberty, on being told, it would be thought that he was afraid of Du Guesclin, if he kept him in prison.

*Thou, who pretend'st to be the lawful heir
To France.*

These sort of challenges were in those times much in vogue. Edward had defied Philip de Valois, in 1340; Philip challenges Edward in his turn, at the siege of Calais. King John did the same in 1335. All these flighty proceedings were without effect; inspired by courage, and suppressed by reason.

*O! sir, remember yours, had you been present
When the tormenting red-hot irons were
Prepar'd.*

Edward has been accused of being a barbarous son; 'tis said, that he dethroned his father; and afterwards put his mother in prison, where she was confined eight and twenty years, allowing her only a yearly pension of five hundred pounds. The first of these facts is absolutely false; and the other is unjust and ill grounded in its consequences. (*See Rymer's Acts.*)

Return then to thy king.

Godfréy of Harcourt received his letters of grace the 27th of December, 1346. He served with great reputation till the death of his nephew, who was beheaded at Rouën, by the or-

der, and under the eyes of King John. This execution made him retake up arms against his master. He was killed in 1356, near his estate of St. Saviour in Normandy, in a combat where he performed prodigies of valour. He made his will, in which he left all that he was worth to the King of England; which occasioned one of the articles of the treaty of Brittany. Edward, with King John's consent, bestowed this succession to the illustrious Chandois. (*See Froissard and La Roque.*)



I here renounce their throne.

There was only a truce made between the two kings after the surrender of Calais, which lasted during the reign of Philip. The war was renewed under that of his son, King John; and it was not till the treaty of Brittany, that Edward, at last, renounced his pretensions to the throne of France.



Methinks it would not be improper here to say a few words concerning the salick law; on which most historians have reasoned so ill; there are very few that even understood the state of the question which occasioned the dispute between Philip and Edward.

The true foundation of the salick law, is unfolded in the third act. It was the will and consent of the whole nation that established it, to prevent their scepter from ever falling into the hands of a foreigner. This law was avowed, and re-established by the assembly of the peers, and by the states general, who decided the question in Philip's favour. This fundamental law is owned even by Rapiu himself.

Edward knew very well the nature of the salick law; he must necessarily have known it; since Philip le Bel left a daughter, which, without this law, had equally excluded from the crown both Edward and Philip. And this is what historians, either ill-intentioned or ill-informed, have not mentioned; and which makes Smollet ingenuously own, that Edward had no right to the throne he claimed.

But Edward's plea was, that the salick law excluded females only on account of the weakness of their sex; and therefore that their male descendants, for that very reason, could not be in the case of exclusion; to which it was answered without reply, that the weakness of the sex was never so much as thought of, in the establishment of the salick law; since it has been almost always a rule, in case of a minority, to depose the government

government into the hands of the queens their mothers. With the same evidence they made it appear, that this law had no other object, but to prevent their crown from falling to a foreign prince, as the nation had yet never suffered one to mount the throne, since the foundation of the monarchy; therefore the salick law was still in greater force against Edward, than against his mother. This discussion was not very easy to bring into a drama; and yet it was indispensable, as one may say, where the heroes were the martyrs of Philip's cause, and consequently of the salick law.

The E N D of the N O T E S.